

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1        1. A method of forming a head assembly comprising:  
2                providing a base member;  
3                forming a plurality of head components upon the base member  
4                individually adapted to communicate information relative to media;  
5                providing a plurality of component regions adjacent respective ones of the  
6                head components and a path of travel of the media; and  
7                providing a support region intermediate adjacent ones of the head  
8                components and positioned to support the media moving along the path of travel,  
9                the support region comprising a material different than a material of the component  
10          regions.
- 1        2. The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the providing the  
2                support region comprises providing the support region comprising a material having  
3                a hardness greater than a material of the component regions.
- 1        3. The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the providing the  
2                support region comprises providing the support region comprising a material having  
3                a greater resistance to wear than a material of the component regions.
- 1        4. The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the forming  
2                comprises forming the head components to individually comprise a read element  
3                and a write element.
- 1        5. The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the forming  
2                comprises forming the head components to communicate using Linear Tape Open  
3                technology.

1           6.     The method in accordance with claim 1 further comprising  
2     providing an insulating layer and wherein the providing the component regions  
3     comprises removing portions of the insulating layer to form the component regions.

1           7.     The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the providing the  
2     support region comprises forming the support region upon a cover member and  
3     placing the cover member adjacent the base member.

1           8.     The method in accordance with claim 7 wherein the forming the  
2     support region upon the cover member comprises removing portions of the cover  
3     member.

1           9.     The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the providing the  
2     support region comprises depositing support region material over the base member.

1           10.    The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the providing the  
2     base member comprises providing a wafer substrate.

1           11.    The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the forming  
2     comprises forming head components individually configured to communicate digital  
3     information relative to the media comprising a magnetic tape.

1           12. A head assembly configured to communicate information relative  
2 to media comprising:  
3           a base member; and  
4           a head member adjacent the base member and comprising:  
5           a plurality of head components adjacent a path of travel of media  
6 and adapted to communicate information relative to the media;  
7           a plurality of component regions adjacent the path of travel of the  
8 media and respective ones of the head components; and  
9           a support region intermediate adjacent ones of the head  
10 components and positioned to support media moving along the path of travel, the  
11 support region comprising a material different than a material of the component  
12 regions.

1           13. The assembly in accordance with claim 12 wherein the support  
2 region material has a hardness greater than the material of the component regions.

1           14. The assembly in accordance with claim 12 wherein the support  
2 region material has a greater resistance to wear than the material of the component  
3 regions.

1           15. The assembly in accordance with claim 12 wherein the head  
2 components individually comprise a read element and a write element.

1           16. The assembly in accordance with claim 12 wherein the support  
2 region comprises a portion of a cover member.

1           17. The assembly in accordance with claim 12 wherein the head  
2 components are configured to communicate information relative to the media using  
3 Linear Tape Open technology.

1           18. The assembly in accordance with claim 12 wherein the base  
2 member comprises a wafer substrate.

1           19. The assembly in accordance with claim 12 wherein the head  
2 components are individually configured to communicate digital information relative  
3 to the media comprising a magnetic tape.

1           20. A linear tape drive configured to communicate information relative  
2 to a tape comprising:

3                 an input/output adapted to couple with an external device;  
4                 a cartridge receiving assembly adapted to receive a cartridge including a  
5 tape; and

6                 a head assembly positioned adjacent a path of travel of the tape, the  
7 head assembly comprising:

8                 a base member;

9                 a cover member adjacent the base member; and

10                a head member intermediate the base member and the cover  
11 member and comprising:

12                a plurality of head components configured to communicate  
13 information relative to the tape, including reading information from the tape and  
14 writing information to the tape;

15                a plurality of component regions adjacent the path of travel  
16 of the tape and respective ones of the head components; and

17                a support region intermediate adjacent ones of the head  
18 components and positioned to support a tape moving along the path of travel, the  
19 support region comprising a material having a hardness greater than a material of  
20 the component regions.